

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PHNOM 02160 100809 Z

15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CU-04 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-09

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 T-03 AID-20 OMB-01

DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /126 W
----- 018978

R 100627 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 453

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

USDEL FRANCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 2160

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, CB

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO DEMANDS OF STRIKING TEACHERS

1. SUMMARY. IN RESPONSE TO THE DEMANDS OF STRIKING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS THE GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO REDUCE THE PRICE OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AND TAKE STEPS TO RESOLVE OTHER PROBLEMS. THE INITIAL REACTION OF THE TEACHERS WAS UNFAVORABLE BUT IT IS NOT YET CLEAR HOW THEY WILL RESPOND TO THE TOTAL GOVERNMENT PACKAGE PRESENTED TO THE PARLIAMENT YESTERDAY. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MARCH 6 THE GOVERNMENT RESPONDED TO THE DEMANDS OF STRIKING TEACHERS IN A " DECISION" SIGNED BY PRIME MINISTER HANG THUN HAK. IN THIS " DECISION" THE GOVERNMENT DECLARED THAT IT WAS TAKING MEASURES TO STOP ILLEGAL PRICE INCREASES, RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF SALARIES, PREVENT THE IMPORTATION OF UNNECESSARY PRODUCTS, INCREASE REVENUE, AND INSTITUTE A POLICY OF AUSTERITY. THE GOVERNMENT ASKED THAT THE TEACHERS RETURN TO WORK IN THE HIGHER INTERESTS OF THE NATION AND IN ORDER TO ALLOW TIME FOR THE MEASURES LISTED ABOVE TO TAKE EFFECT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PHNOM 02160 100809 Z

3. IN A RADIO ADDRESS ON MARCH 7 LON NOL REFERRED TO THE TEACHERS STRIKE AND DECLARED THAT HE HAD GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT TO LOWER PRICES AND FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION, WHICH HE CALLED THE PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF UNREASONABLE PRICE INCREASES.

4. THE TEACHERS MET ON MARCH 8 TO CONSIDER THE GOVERNMENT "DECISION" AND DECIDED THAT IT WAS INADEQUATE SINCE IT DID NOT STATE WHEN THE MEASURES WOULD GO INTO EFFECT. THE TEACHERS THEREFORE AGREED TO CONTINUE THEIR STRIKE AND TO GIVE THE GOVERNMENT A 7- DAY PERIOD IN WHICH TO NEGOTIATE ACCEPTABLE PROPOSALS. AT THE END OF THIS PERIOD, IF NO SOLUTION HAS BEEN REACHED, THE TEACHERS DECLARED THAT THEY WILL DEMONSTRATE PEACEFULLY IN THE STREETS. THEY ALSO DECIDED TO WITHDRAW CONFIDENCE FROM ANY GOVERNMENT WHICH IS INCAPABLE OF SOLVING THE PROBLEM OF INFLATION AND TO ORGANIZE A " POPULAR CONGRESS" IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

5. ON MARCH 9 PRIME MINISTER HANG THUN HAK AND THE ENTIRE CABINET APPEARED BEFORE A JOINT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT TO ANNOUNCE A SIXTEEN POINT PLAN TO DEAL WITH THE DEMANDS OF STRIKING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS. THE PLAN WAS DESCRIBED AS A RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT LON NOL' S MESSAGE TO THE NATION " ORDERING THE GOVERNMENT AND PARLIAMENT TO WORK TOGETHER TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF PRICE INCREASES THAT LED TO THE TEACHERS STRIKE". THE SIXTEEN POINTS INCLUDE: REDUCTION IN THE PRICE OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS (A REDUCTION OF 3 RIELS IN THE PRICE OF GASOLINE AND 1 RIEL IN THE PRICE OF OTHER PETROLEUM PRODUCTS WAS ANNOUNCED LATER); NO CHANGE IN THE PRICE OF WATER AND ELECTRICITY FOR AT LEAST TWO MONTHS; NO CHANGE IN THE PRICE OF RICE; REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF OFFICIALS WITH THE RANK OF MINISTER, SECRETARY OF STATE AND UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE; REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL IN THE EXECUTIVE CABINET OF THE PRESIDENT; ORGANIZATION OF COMMITTEES TO CONTROL PRICES IN ALL KHANDS AND DISTRICTS; ESTABLISHMENT OF COOPERATIVES TO PROVIDE BASIC NECESSITIES; INVESTIGATION OF CORRUPTION, ABUSES OF POWER, SMUGGLING, USURY, ETC. BY GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL AND PRIVATE CITIZENS; REVIEW OVER THE NEXT THREE MONTHS OF THE SALARY LEVELS OF ALL SALARIED WORKERS; RENEWED EFFORTS TO REDUCE IMPORTATION OF LUXURY GOODS AND CONTROL GOVERNMENT SPENDING; AND FORMATION OF CONVOYS TO PREVENT BRIBES DURING TRANSPORTATION OF GOODS TO MARKET.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 02160 100809 Z

6. THE HANG THUN HAK STATEMENT MAKES CONCESSIONS ON ALL OF THE

MAJOR POINTS RAISED BY THE STRIKING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS. IT WAS NOT, HOWEVER, PARTICULARLY WELL RECEIVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SEVERAL OF THE DEPUTIES DISMISSED IT AS MERE RHETORIC WHICH WOULD NEVER BE PUT INTO APPLICATION. THE TEACHERS WILL MEET THIS AFTERNOON TO CONSIDER THE NEW GOVERNMENT POSITION. IN A MORNING MEETING THEY DID NOT DIRECTLY ADDRESS THE GOVERNMENT PLAN BUT REAFFIRMED THEIR INTENTION TO JUDGE THE GOVERNMENT BY THE RESULTS IT OBTAINS RATHER THAN THE PROCLAMATIONS IT MAKES.

7. SEPTTEL ON DETAILS OF MODIFICATIONS OF ECONOMIC PROGRAM TO FOLLOW.

SWANK

CONFIDENTIAL

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PHNOM02160
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: PHNOM PENH
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730325/aaaahlse.tel
Line Count: 131
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EAP
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Nov-2001 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <13-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> wfs 971118
Subject: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO DEMANDS OF STRIKING TEACHERS
TAGS: PINS, CB
To: BANGKOK
CINCPAC
EA
FRANCE
SAIGON
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005